
Parents FLAG Edmonton

DECEMBER 1994

NEXT MEETING:



PFLAG CHRISTMAS

PARTY

8:00 PM

Friday, December 9, 1994

Unitarian Church

12530 - 110 Ave.

Please RSVP to Lynne [redacted] or Cindy [redacted] by Nov 6, '94, and let them know what you're bringing, e.g. sweet or savory. Liquid refreshments will be available. (Please do not bring your own liquor)

PFLAG ADVOCACY

An important function of PFLAG parents is to be visible as parents who love, support and are proud of our lesbian, gay and bisexual children. During the past month PFLAG parents have advocated at the following functions:

I GALOC (Gays and Lesbians on Campus) October 31 monthly meeting. Nine parents responded to an invitation from GALOC to

attend this meeting. Each parent talked briefly about their homosexual or bisexual child, the process involved in "coming out" and the process involved in accepting the "coming out". The latter varied from great relief to anger to bewilderment and surprise. The floor was then opened to the audience of about thirty-five people for questions and comments.

After the meeting was adjourned several students stayed behind to talk to parents on a one-to-one basis. Their joy at being able to talk to an accepting and supportive parent engendered in us a deep

humility for having done so little yet being rewarded so richly. This appreciation gives us the encouragement to continue on to do more and better things!



II TOWN HALL MEETING

of "The Liason Committee" was so well attended that every chair was taken and people were standing. PFLAG was represented by five parents.

In June 1992 the Edmonton Police Service and the Gay and Lesbian community formed a liaison committee to promote an atmosphere of understanding and mutual respect through effective communication and education.

The committee consists of no more than eight policepersons and twelve members from the lesbian and gay community.

The Edmonton Police Service is "committed to the fair and equitable treatment of all citizens. We strongly endorse the principle



that everyone has the right to services that are free of bias, prejudice or harassment".

The focus of this committee is to:

*Promote effective two-way communication;

*Promote education and awareness;

*Identify and resolve crime and safety concerns;

* Increase police awareness of lifestyle issues.

Funding for the issues of minority groups so often depends on accurate statistics. For this reason, as well as obvious others, please encourage all lesbians and gays that you may have contact with (either directly or indirectly) to **report all cases of harassment or violence to the police at the following number:**

424 - 7248 pager 293

This is a 24 -hour number. You may be asked to leave a return phone number, but leaving your name is optional.

III AIDS BENEFIT

A benefit for victims of AIDS was held at the "Roost" on Nov. 11, '94. Over \$300 was raised through entertainment - talented singers, uproarious comedians, etc. - a Chinese auction and a quilt raffle. The eight PFLAG members there had a wonderful time. Thanks for inviting us!

The following serious advertisement was seen on a bulletin board in Boystown:

"Huge apartment in very gay-friendly building. Large balcony and lots of closet space."

Parents FLAG Edmonton



BE AN ADVOCATE!

Roseanne Skoke, Liberal MP from Nova Scotia, proudly and determinedly stands by her statement, "AIDS spreading homosexuals are annihilating mankind." She also claims that homosexuals are immoral, unnatural and destroy families.

Although Svend Robinson, homosexual MP from Burnaby, Kingsway, B.C, said that kind of hateful conduct has no place in the House of Commons, Skoke replied that she "would under no circumstances" retract her statements.

It is crucially important for the future of our lesbian and gay children that **each of us parents** write about the love and support we feel for our children and explain the strengths that families draw from their lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and heterosexual members. **Please write a letter, making two copies, and send to the following:**

Right Honorable Jean Chretien,
Prime Minister
Langevin Block, 80 Wellington
St., Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A3

Roseanne Skoke, MP
House of Commons, Confederation
Building, Room 630, Ottawa, Ont.
K1A 0A6

Svend Robinson, MP
House of Commons, West Block,
Room 483, Ottawa, Ont. K1A 0A6.
No postage is required!

These letters and advocating with PFLAG members are the best gift we can give our children. Please volunteer!

TRANSCENDING PREJUDICE

by Brian Read

(condensed from an article in ParentsBANNER, Seattle, WA)

No matter how liberal we consider ourselves to be, we are all prejudiced. The design of prejudice is pretty straight forward: the faculty to judge is fundamental to our survival. Without this faculty we would not know to avoid endangerment and we would continue to make mistakes. In that we judge, sometimes we do so before we have all the facts about a person or situation, or we prejudge.



When a prejudgment goes unchecked or unchallenged, it can become truth for us. What we perceive as truth in turn can determine our actions. Rarely are we motivated by something we don't believe in. Add to that prejudgment an element of fear of the unknown, or a threat to our quality of life, and what we have is a combination which, when unchecked or unchallenged, can escalate to bigotry and acts of hate.



Not all prejudices, however, are negative. The same process can occur for someone you like. You meet someone and decide they are someone you want as a friend, even though you know little or nothing about them. You have judged them before you had all the facts, or you have prejudged them. Being prejudiced is neither good nor bad, it is just what you do with it.



Prejudices sometimes seem to be snap judgments we have in the moment and about which we feel ashamed after the thought. This is especially true for those of us who are aware of our prejudice and are trying to make a difference and not judge others. We go through the day and all of a sudden we have an ugly thought about a person we see or encounter and wonder where that came from.

Prejudice is not as individual to us as we may think. There are prejudices which were decided upon long, long ago, so deeply ingrained in our culture that until somebody interrupts them they are passed off as truth. Like fish in water, we swim in them not knowing any difference. Only when we are pulled by our tail out of the water and held above it do we understand there is something

beyond the water of the circumstances in which we live.

The anti-gay initiatives and legislation attempting to gain voter approval around the country is an example of this. For many years homosexuals have been deemed in our society as bad, wrong and deviant, and these judgments have lived in our society as if they were true. It is according to this "truth" people feel they must fight the "gay agenda" and "homosexual lifestyle".

I don't fault someone for swimming in that understanding of homosexuality if that has been the only water they have known. **Fortunately, more and more homosexuals, their families and friends are coming out with their experiences and interrupting this cultural prejudice.** We want to look for even more powerful and deliberate ways in which to disengage the comprehension our country has held about homosexuality and other exhibited prejudices.

Editor's note: Please bring your ideas for parent advocacy to our monthly meetings. Thankyou - and remember to write that letter to the above addresses if you haven't already done so!



Overheard in a conversation between two homosexual people, "Today, I just can't think straight!"

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A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The following letter was written to the editor of the Vancouver Sun in response to columnist Denny Boyd's article:

Denny Boyd suggests hatred cannot be prosecuted or proven and says that Svend Robinson has overreacted to Roseanne Skoke's comments about gays ("Svend jumps over the moon as the majority is cowed by political correctness", Oct. 7, '94)

Mr. Boyd suggests that you cannot prosecute what is in someone's mind. He is wrong. Criminal law does this all the time - it is called motive. Throughout the criminal legal system, decisions are made about whether an offence was planned and deliberate, and how serious the sentence should be, based on what was proven to be someone's intent.

Bill C-41, which deals with guidelines for judges in sentencing, suggests that if crimes are motivated by hatred for a particular group, judges should take them more seriously. **Ms Skoke advocated that this apply to everybody but homosexuals.** This in an outrageous position.

What we are talking about here is gay-bashing and murders of gay men. Mr. Boyd's dismissal of the



seriousness of Ms. Skoke's remarks is appalling.

What goes on in the mind's of people who commit criminal offences is an integral part of determining both their guilt and their sentence. Surely, it is morally wrong to advocate that if the victim is a gay man, this is somehow less serious than if it were anybody else.



Our PFLAG year goes from Oct 1, '94 to Sept 30, '95. Since October, only 16 memberships have been received. Monies expended for pamphlets, newsletter, phone line, PFLAG federation dues and advocacy exceed this amount. Can you help us?

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PFLAG VIDEOS

The following videos are now available for loan to PFLAG members: (Contact Cindy or Ernie)

- *The Gay Gene 45min
- *The Mardi Gras (Australia) 1 hr
- *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner (All are HIV +ve) 56min
- *Sexual Orientation; Reading Between the Lines 30min
- *Why Am I Gay? and Just For Fun 1hr
- *Doing Time on Maple Drive
- *The Gay Nineties-Interviews by Maria Schryver 47min
- *Growing up Gay

Surely it is totally lacking in common sense to suggest that if someone hits a man over the head and says in a subsequent statement that he thought the victim was a fag and he hates fags, this should not be taken into account in sentencing.

Surely Mr Robinson is entitled to be outraged by Ms Skoke's position. I am.

Kenneth Smith, Co-Chair
Lesbian and Gay Rights
B.C. Branch
Canadian Bar Association



EVENTS CALENDAR

Woman's Space Dance

Saturday, December 17, 1994

8:00 PM - 1:00 AM

Bonnie Doon Hall

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Individual Membership	\$15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Household Membership	\$25	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student/limited Income	\$10	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newsletter subscription	\$10	<input type="checkbox"/>
Donation	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>



Make cheques payable to P-FLAG/Edmonton and Mail to:
Cindy [redacted]



Name _____
Address _____
City _____
Postal Code _____

Date _____
Phone _____
Prov. _____



P-FLAG is a non-profit and all volunteer support P-FLAG group not affiliated with any ethnic, political or religious organizations. Memberships are available for all. All information collected is strictly confidential.

IT'S A GAY LIFE !

DECEMBER 1994

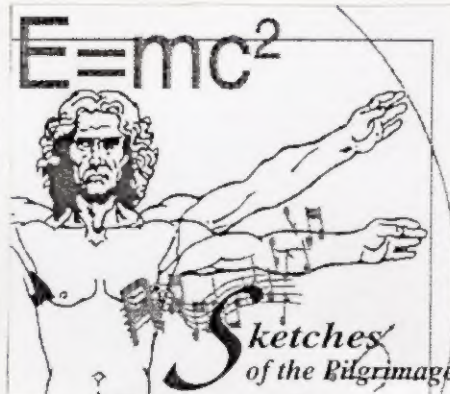
LEONARDO DA VINCI, INVENTOR PAR EXCELLENCE

In the hamlet of Anchiano, twenty miles from Florence, Leonardo first saw the light of day on April 15, 1452.

Of his mother little is known but his father, a rich and respected lawyer 25 years of age, left him to be raised by a peasant family in Vinci, a town near his birthplace. Later he brought the child into his own home. During his years in Vinci the boy had no formal schooling; he roamed the countryside absorbing the natural beauty of the birds, beasts and flowers, studying their forms and activities.

When Leonardo was fifteen he was taken to Florence where he learned painting, sculpture, gold smithing and bronze casting. At this time Florence was a centre of the Renaissance, famous for the Medici and many other illustrious families. Dante, Michelangelo, Galileo, and Machiavelli were his contemporaries. In this artistic, literary and scientific centre research into anatomy, astronomy, geography, mathematics and medicine forged ahead on a base of classical Greek and Roman culture.

Leonardo, having never learned Latin, was denied direct access to much classical knowledge. Thus his own vision emerged untainted by dogmatic opinions. His exceptional ingenuity, curiosity



and mental flexibility, stimulated by the creative ferment of this Renaissance city, flowered into genius.

However beneath his outward presence and charming manner lay a tormented and lonely soul. In spite of having his own studio by his early twenties his career did not go well. Leonardo was blacklisted on charges of homosexuality thus losing favor with the powerful Medici family.

Moving northwards to Milan he worked for Duke Ludovico Sforza where he achieved fame and success at last with an outpouring of inventions, sketched and described in detail. These included optics, engineering, military machines, court theatrical displays, painting and costume designs!

Strangely Leonardo wrote backwards (from right to left) in Italian using his left hand. This simple code was decipherable by using a mirror. He may have been suspected of coniving with the Devil since the left side was known in Latin as the "sinister" side - and Fundamentalism was alive and well way back then!

In 1499 his patron fell on hard times so Leonardo, almost penniless, returned to Florence with his young companion, Salai.

The last twenty years of his life saw him working as Military Engineer to Cesar Borgia, then as Painter and Engineer to King Louis XII. Finally, in 1516 as Architect to King Francis 1st, he lived in princely style, still working but as an honored guest of the King.

On May 2, 1519, he died of a stroke leaving his notebooks crammed full of inventions for the coming generations - all manner of war machines, cannon, catapults, battle tanks, aircraft, not to mention impregnable fortresses to resist them. His sixty-seven types of crank mechanisms to change a piston movement into rotary motion led the way for the steam and later the internal combustion engine! A sketch of a chain driven bicycle appears three centuries before our modern bike hit the streets.



The light of Leonardo da Vinci still shines today. As a Gay, left-handed love-child he lived an admirably full and productive life.

Condensed by E. Young from "Leonardo's Inventions" by Jean Mathe, Minerva Books.

Record Set for Da Vinci Manuscript

(An excerpt from The Globe and Mail, Saturday, November 12, 1994)

NEW YORK - A 72-page manuscript of Leonardo da Vinci's scientific diagrams and notes in his distinctive backward "mirror script" sold at auction yesterday for a record \$30.8-million US.

IT'S A GAY LIFE

The volume, consisting of everything from why the sky is blue to advice on building dams, brought the highest price ever paid for a manuscript... In the manuscript, dated 1508 to 1510, Leonardo explores such topics as astronomy, geography, geology, hydraulics and canal building.

Hoping your Holiday Season



is filled with love & joy